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ABSTRACT

A model was developed for implementing career education into an existing curriculum and is composed of four essential elements based on a perceived need: needs assessment, participation facilitation, curriculum design and implementation process. Each element of the model is totally dependent on the completion of the components comprising each preceding element. The model was applied in the Cooperative Educational Service Agency No. 1 which is composed of 14 school systems in six counties in northwestern Wisconsin. The model, as applied to two pilot school systems, was intended to serve as a guide for other school systems. Through application the model was found to be viable in implementing career education into an existing curriculum. Development of attitudes and communications skills is essential to the participation of parents, teachers, and students in creating the curricular design. Needs must be identified and satisfied in the implementation process. Evaluation and followup should provide necessary feedback to insure an acceptable level of implementation. It is recommended that others test the model for usefulness and possible improvement. Further application should support its practicality for urban as well as for rural settings. (Author)

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A MODEL FOR IMPLEMENTING CAREER EDUCATION WITHIN AN EXISTING CURRICULUM

(Script of audio presentation at Annual Convention of the American Personnel and Guidance Association, New York City, March, 1975)

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AN ABSTRACT

The American economic system is characterized by constant changes which contribute to the complexity of the world of work. Accurate perception of the needs for making the transition from school to the world of work consequently is most difficult. The difficulty is compounded by the limited opportunities youth have to adequately experience work-world contact. This problem has emphasized the need for career education which can be implemented within the existing school curriculum.

A model was developed for implementing career education into an existing curriculum and is composed of four essential elements based upon a perceived need. The four elements are needs assessment, participation facilitation, curriculum design and implementation process. Each element of the model is totally dependent upon the completion of the components comprising each preceding element. The model was applied in the Cooperative Educational Service Agency #1 (C.E.S.A. #1 is composed of fourteen school systems in six counties in northwestern Wisconsin). The model, as applied to two pilot school systems, was intended to serve as a guide for other school systems. Through application the model was found to be viable in implementing career education into an existing curriculum.

Development of attitudes and communications skills is essential to the participation of parents, teachers and students in creating the curricular design. Needs must be identified and satisfied in the implementation process. Evaluation and follow-up should provide necessary feedback to insure an acceptable level of implementation. It is recommended that others test the model for usefulness and possible improvement. Further application should support its practicality for urban as well as for rural settings.

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A MODEL FOR IMPLEMENTING CAREER EDUCATION WITHIN AN EXISTING CURRICULUM

The purpose of this presentation is to present a model which was utilized in designing and implementing career education within an existing K-12 curriculum. The two of us who developed the model served as consultants to a Title III project designed for that purpose.

The American economic system is characterized by constant changes which contribute to the complexity of the world of work. Accurate perception of the needs for making the transition from school to that world of work, consequently, is most difficult. The difficulty is compounded by the limited opportunities youth have to adequately experience work world contact. This problem emphasizes the need for career education.

Career education as a curricular content area has been broadly defined. Hoyt provided this definition:

> "Career education" is the totality of experiences through which one learns about and prepares to engage in work as part of her or his way of living.[1]

Subscribing to that idea requires a school system to develop specific procedures for implementing career education within its existing curriculum. It is to this end that this presentation has been directed.

The Model

The model developed is composed of four essential elements based upon a perceived need. The four elements are Needs Assessment, Participation Facilitation, Curriculum Design and Implementation Process. Each

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[1]Kenneth B. Hoyt, "An Introduction to Career Education: A Policy Paper of the U.S. Office of Education", DHEW Publication No. (OE) 75-00504, Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975, pp. 3-4.

element of the model is totally dependent upon the completion of the components comprising each preceding element. The complete model is shown graphically using a concentric circular design. It is assumed that evaluation is vital to each stage in the application of the model.

Perceived Need

Any individual or group information, whether subjective or objective, that ellicits concern regarding the school's success in preparing people for the world of work may be identified as perceived need. This perceived need may be applied generally or specifically to curricular development for career education.

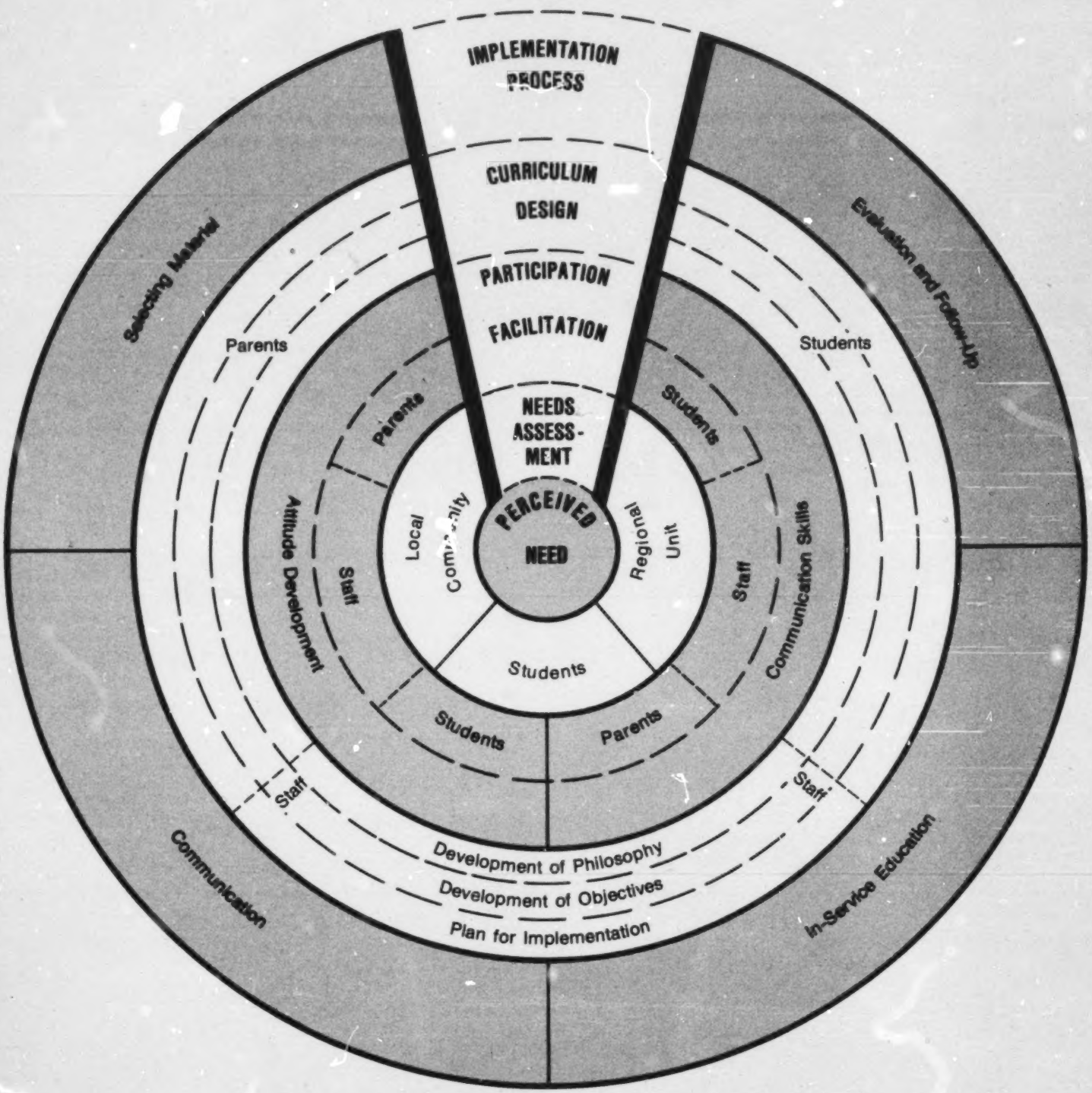
Needs Assessment

Needs assessment applies to the collection and analysis of data. The initiation of needs assessment results from the realization of a perceived need. From this locus, needs are assessed for the area, the community and present as well as former students. The concern, in the application of this model, should be the uniqueness of the regional unit.

Participation Facilitation

Participation facilitation is the development of attitudes and communication skills of parents, students and teachers necessary for a team approach in the development of a career education curriculum. Attitude development requires the participants to become cognizant of the need for career education. This is accomplished by creating an awareness of the needs assessed from the regional unit, the local community and the students. In developing an attitudinal disposition toward career education it is important that the participants understand that the career education curriculum being developed will be unique in that it is based on

Career Education Curriculum Implementation Model



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the needs assessment for their regional unit, their local community and the students.

The development of positive attitudes facilitates the participant's development of communication skills. The acquisition of these communication skills facilitates the next phase of the model, Curricular Design. These communication skills enhance the processes of listening and responding to each other in harmony.

Curricular Design

The curricular design requires the participation of parents, certificated staff, and students in development of a philosophy arising from needs identified. Those participants are identified as the School Career Education Committee. The philosophy developed leads to the identification of objectives which form the basis for the career education curriculum. The plan for implementation is directed toward incorporating the philosophy and objectives into a curricular design appropriate for the school system.

Implementation Process

Implementation is the utilization of the curricular design. The implementation process involves (1) selecting material which are needed to achieve the objectives of the curriculum, (2) carrying out necessary communications between school and community, and (3) providing the in-service education activities which teachers need to utilize the curricular design. The final step in implementation is (4) the evaluation and follow-up. This evaluation is necessary for <u>each</u> step in the implementation process, but it is also necessary to determine strengths and weaknesses in the Curriculum Design, the Participation Facilitation and the Needs Assessment. The evaluation and follow-up, consequently, may

initiate a reentry of the model at the point of Perceived Need and may result in reapplication of the model.

Application

The conceptualized model was applied to assist in designing and implementing a K-12 career education curriculum in the Cooperative Educational Service Agency #1 (C.E.S.A. #1 is composed of fourteen school systems in six counties in northwestern Wisconsin).[2] The model, as applied to two pilot school systems, was intended to serve as a guide for the remaining school systems in the C.E.S.A. #1 area, and possibly for the other school systems in the state of Wisconsin. Both pilot school systems were located in rural communities. One had a student population, K-12, of approximately five hundred. The other had a K-12 student enrollment of approximately four hundred. These school systems were representative of the majority of those in the C.E.S.A. #1 area.

Perceived Need

Effective career development activities in the schools of the area had been somewhat restricted because of the general sparcity of population and the isolated conditions under which most of the people live. A review of the U.S. census figures indicated that C.E.S.A. #1 area generally has had a declining population which is comparatively older, more rural and less educated than is the population for Wisconsin as a whole. Out migration is the main factor causing the declining population within this area. The individuals in the 15 to 44 age group are leaving this area in relatively large numbers to seek better job opportunities and to

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[2]This Career Education Project was funded by three Title III Grants awarded through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1972-75.

establish their families elsewhere.[3] The educational need for which this project was designed was determined by area guidance counselors, citizen advisory groups, school administrators and university personnel. These needs were expressed frequently at gatherings of counselors and C.E.S.A. #1 meetings.

Needs Assessment

Thirty-three counselors from fourteen school districts developed the needs assessment program. Surveys were designed to (1) gather information pertaining to employment opportunities in C.E.S.A. #1, (2) investigate the potential for expanded job opportunities in C.E.S.A. #1 in the 1970's, (3) determine current career exploration and capstone programs available in C.E.S.A. #1, (4) study existing vocational technical education programs in C.E.S.A. #1 and relate them to expressed needs of the area, (5) compile recent research projects in C.E.S.A. #1, (6) follow up graduates from participating school districts, and (7) compile a list of area agencies that could provide service and training for area students.

Surveys investigating the opportunities for employment available in the C.E.S.A. #1 area and the potential for expanded job opportunities in the 1970's resulted in an employer-directed questionnaire that follows DOT Classification. This questionnaire was designed to survey all jobs in C.E.S.A. #1 regardless of sex, race and age. The occupations surveyed covered the five counties of Ashland, Bayfield, Douglas, Iron, and Sawyer. It was found that the counties had a fifteen percent unemployment rate and that the majority of job offerings were seasonal; i.e., mainly recreational and shipping.

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[3]Vocational, Technical and Adult Education District No. 17. Project #102. Population Analysis.

Assessment conducted to determine current career exploration and capstone programs available in C.E.S.A. #1 involved the development of a survey instrument sent to each school in the C.E.S.A. #1 area. The distinction between a capstone program and a career exploration program is that a capstone course is a culminating course offered at the senior high school level; a career exploration course leads to, or might lead to, a capstone program or the career objective of a student. It was found that the number of course offerings of the exploratory nature and the capstone courses varied widely among the fourteen school systems of C.E.S.A. #1. Most capstone courses were found in the larger schools. Eight of the schools indicated that they offered one or more capstone courses and that a total of twenty-two capstone courses was offered. It should be noted that a student may enroll in more than one capstone course. Less than seven percent of the students in grades 9-12 enrolled in capstone courses. There were 5018 students in grades 9-12 enrolled in career exploration courses in C.E.S.A. #1. Considering that a student may be enrolled in more than one course, well over fifty percent of all high school students in C.E.S.A. #1 are probably in some career exploration course.

A survey was conducted to study the vocational-technical education program in C.E.S.A. #1. This survey concentrated on the courses available through the vocational-technical schools in Ashland and Superior. It was found that a definite need exists for the two schools to expand their offerings into additional vocational areas. With the potential for recreational occupations within the C.E.S.A. #1 area, the schools should consider training students in those careers that are needed. There also was a definite need for more and varied short-term courses. Such areas as restaurant work, filling station attendants, clerks, nurses' aides,

and other similar occupations provide the schools the opportunity to expand their short-term offerings.

The information gathered from existing research projects seemed to fall into the following general classifications:

1) School follow-ups including those of high school, and vocational-technical school.

2) Community booster data and prognostications.

3) State employment services reports on jobs.

4) Other sources.

A survey of C.E.S.A. #1 students who graduated from participating school districts was completed in 1964. Another survey was conducted of 1968 graduates. Both reports were concerned with the following general questions:

1) How many graduates leave this area?

2) What circumstances involve the decision of those who leave?

3) What type of education and training did the graduates have after leaving high school?

4) What is the current employment status of the graduates?

5) What trends are developing when comparing the 1964 report to the present study?

Participation Facilitation

All of the counselors within the C.E.S.A. #1 area met once a month as a group. The counselors were divided into three distinct groups; the divisions were based on the geographical relationships of their own school systems to the two selected K-12 school systems. Counselors in each of the three groups were given a condensed needs assessment report for the selected school system in which they were organizing and leading discussions. Three Counselor Educators served as consultants for the three

groups of counselors in helping prepare them for organizing and leading discussions with teachers from the three selected K-12 school systems. The specific competencies for which the counselors were prepared were (1) organizing teachers into groups and explaining the needs for their school systems as addressed from the needs assessment, (2) listening to what is being said by the teachers without reacting with their own perceptions, and (3) facilitating the teachers' discussions by use of reflection (not by their own value statements).

After the counselor training sessions, the counselors operated discussion seminars for the teachers in the two selected K-12 school systems. The three university consultants observed the counselors conducting the sessions for the teachers. The specific competencies which the counselors utilized were (1) giving feedback that is acceptable and not overpowering (i.e., it is clear, precise, and understood), (2) facilitative group skills that permit all of the teachers to be heard and assumptions to be checked out (i.e., noting verbal and non-verbal cues), and (3) decision-making skills (i.e., combining lists teachers have prepared for needs of their school and community and making tentative decisions about needs for their curriculum).

The teachers in the two selected K-12 school systems led the students and parents within their own school systems in discussion on the needs of the community and the school in relation to curricular offerings. The teachers conducted these sessions after three or four months of work with the counselors. The counselors observed the teachers conducting these sessions. The specific competencies that the teachers utilized were (1) organizing students and their parents into groups and explaining the needs for their school system as assessed, (2) listening to what was

being said by the students and their parents without reacting with their own perceptions, and (3) facilitating the students' and their parents' discussion by use of reflection (not by their own value statements).

Curriculum Design

Several meetings were planned in each of the two pilot school districts for parents, teachers and students to develop philosophy and objectives. Meetings were held for representative students, for representative parents, for teachers, and meetings were held for combined groups of the representative parents, students and teachers. The combined group of parents, students and teachers has been identified as the School Career Education Committee. Each meeting was planned to develop a statement of philosophy reflecting an understanding and commitment to the conceptual basis for a career education curriculum.

Meetings were planned in each of the two pilot school districts during which the specific objectives were developed based on the accepted philosophy. Subsequent meetings were planned for each of the two pilot school districts during which the Committee developed plans for implementing the accepted objectives in the existing school curriculum.

The School Career Education Committees in the two pilot school systems were successful in developing their philosophy, goals and objectives for a career education curriculum. The Committee refined their statements upon deliberation on their philosophy. The objectives then were elaborated to identify desired outcomes. The two Committees went through a similar experience. The philosophy, goals and objectives developed for the school systems were stated in a similar manner although they were developed independently by the two Committees for the two systems.

Implementation Process

During the summer months, three teachers from each of the two pilot school districts were awarded contracts to design implementation strategies based on the career education curriculum developed by the Committee . The teachers received guidance and assistance from project directors and area counselors. Their work resulted in a career education guide for the school system. In the fall, one meeting was planned each month for each of the two pilot school systems to assist teachers in utilizing the curricular design developed for each of the school systems. The summer-contracted teachers, then, became the coordinators of the implementation process for their respective school systems. At this time they assumed the duties which the counselors had performed earlier for the coordination of the project. These teachers assisted the staffs in their school systems in (1) identifying and selecting materiel, (2) planning for in-service education activities as needed, (3) designing a forum for communication, and (4) planning for evaluation and follow-up measures.

Summary

The model presented was found to be viable in implementing career education into an existing curriculum. The model was conceptualized from a perceived need. A need for development of a curriculum for career education was identified for a regional unit. The needs assessment identified the lack of coordination of employment in the unit and the dissemination of career information for use by students. It was found that the curriculum needed development to reflect career education needs of students in the regional unit.

The development of attitudes and communication skills is essential to the participation of parents, teachers and students in creating the

curricular design. The development of these attitudes and skills can be effectively executed by area counselors and teachers with proper training and guidance.

Attitudinal and skill development facilitate the statement of a philosophy and related objectives for the curriculum. Coordination is required at this stage to insure that the objectives are stated in terms of desired student outcomes and to insure that the objectives are appropriate to the philosophy developed.

The plan for implementation requires coordination of the objectives of career education with the existing curriculum for all grade levels and subject areas involved. The procedures and resources identified should be related to the existing curriculum in a manner that will result in achievement of the career education objectives. Evaluation must be developed consistent with the career education objectives.

The Implementation Process requires participation in identifying needs of the staff and the community to support the utilization of the career education curriculum. The evaluation and follow-up should further identify the needs and possible reentry into the model at one of the earlier stages and provide support in the implementation stage.

The authors recommend that others test the model for usefulness and improvement. Further application of the model should support its application in urban as well as rural settings.

The End